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SUPER HEROES FROM THE MIND OF

CLIVE BARKER

HOKUM & HEX

THE LADY'S
NAME IS
WRATH

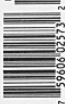


AND SHE'S GOT TRIP IN WAY
OVER HIS HEAD!

OBI

DIRECT EDITION

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IN A MIX OF MAGIC, COMEDY AND EXPLOSIVE SUSPENSE, FAILED STAND-UP COMIC TRIP MUNROE HAS BECOME THE LAST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST A POWERFUL, EXTRA-DIMENSIONAL OVERLORD — IN OTHER WORDS, EARTH'S LAST, BEST HOPE... IS A JOKE.

IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT, TRIP! YOU BLEW IT!

AND NOW, YOUR FRIEND MONA LISA IS DEAD!

CLIVE BARKER PRESENTS... **HOKUM & HEX**

UMMM, HUH? WH-WHAT?

SOMEONE ALWAYS HAS TO GET HURT

A TALE OF THE BARKERVERSE

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THE NAME...
IS WRATH, LITTLE
BOYS!

YOU WANT
I SHOULD SHOW
YOU WHY?





YOU TWO AND THE
BOX-OFFICE CLERK
ARE WITNESSES--
I KILLED IN SELF-
DEFENSE!

Y'KNOW--IF I'D BEEN
A GUY, HE'D HAVE LET
ME TAKE HIM IN, AND
HAVE HIS LAWYER
GET HIM OUT.

BUT THEY
NEVER
TAKE A
WOMAN SERIOUSLY.
SO...



...OOPS, JULIO--
MY FINGER SLIPPED.
GUESS IT'LL BE A
CLOSED-CASKET
FUNERAL.

THERE'S THE
SIRENS, FELLAS.
GET YOUR STORIES
STRAIGHT.

KEEP IN
MIND, I USED
TO BE A GUY--MY
FRIENDS STILL LOOK THE OTHER
WAY ON ACCIDENTS LIKE THIS.

COMPCORDER! DIAL
OFFICE. ACTIVATE STILL-
IMAGE DISPLAY AND
VIDEO TRANSMIS-
SION.



MR. ISBELL... THANK
YOU FOR COMING TO MY
OFFICE. I'VE BEEN MULLING
OVER YOUR OFFER.

MY COMPANY
THOUGHT YOU'D
LIKE THE CHALLENGE,
MR. TRIG. UM,
CAN YOU HEAR
ME ALL RIGHT?

SEE AND HEAR--
I'M HEARING A
VIDEO DISNEY.

AND I DIDN'T
SAY I WAS
ACCEPTING.

SECURITY GUARD BOO!
BAIL JUMPERS
HAIL THEM BACK!
BUTTER THEY!

NOW--YOUR
COMPANY WANTS
THIS "SUPER-
MAGician" WHO
VANISHED AFTER
THAT ROCKEFELLER
CENTER HELE.

YOU SAY YOU KNOW
WHO HE IS--WHEN
EVEN THE POLICE
DON'T. THAT'S
INTERESTING.

AND YOU SAY YOU WANT
ME TO KIDNAP HIM.
THAT'S ILLEGAL.

OH NO, MR. TRIG,
YOU MISUNDERSTAND--



WE'RE A MULTI-
NATIONAL MEDIA
COMPANY. WE WANT
TO PAY HIM FOR
EXCLUSIVE ACCESS
...INTERVIEWS, TV
APPEARANCES.

--EVEN WITH ALL OUR
RESOURCES, WE ONLY
JUST FINISHED OUR
INVESTIGATION
THIS MORNING.

COMPU-
CORDER!
CALL UP A/P
NEWSPHOTO RE: 21A.

ALL RIGHT,
MR. ISBELL.
TELL YOU
WHAT...



LEAVE ME YOUR FILE ON
THE GUY. IF HE IS SUPERPOWERED
--THAT'S A CHALLENGE I'LL
TAKE FOR FREE.

NONSENSE! WE'LL
PAY YOU AMPLY--REMEMBER, NO
DEADLY FORCE.



NO, MR. ISBELL, YOU
MISUNDERSTAND. I'M
A BOUNTY HUNTER.
I WILL TAKE DOWN
THIS DANGEROUS
FUGITIVE... ALIVE
OR DEAD.

NOW LEAVE
ME YOUR
FILE...

...OR MY
LARS MIGHT
MISTAKE YOU
FOR A
BURGLAR.

IT IS BOTH A ~~PARADOX~~
AND A TRUTH: THE HIGH
COMMAND OF FELON
BALE.

FOR FELON BALE IS A
GOD-- ONE OF THE
TEN OF THE DECAMUND.

AND FROM THIS SACRED
HOUSE, ON A WORLD
CALLED THE NEO BYS,
HE SENDS HIS CRUSADERS
TO SPREAD HIS HOLY
WORD...

MY CHILDREN--
YOU HAVE
DONE WELL.

THOUGH THE
ANALYZER WAS ALL
BUT DESTROYED--
YOU HAVE COME
OUT ITS MEMORY.

THANK
YOU.

YOU HONOR
US, LORD
PRAISED BE
FELON BALE.

...WHETHER OTHER WORLDS
WANT IT-- OR NOT.

PRAISED
BE FELON
BALE.

YET AS YOU DELIGHT ME, THE
DEMI-DEITY GODKIN STRAITH...
DISAPPOINTS. HIS SIDE OF OUR
AGREEMENT... HAS NOT BEEN
FAITHFULLY KEPT.

BY DIVINE DECREE, HE PLACED
A TOKEN OF HIS GODHOOD WITHIN
A RANDOM NATIVE--

--AN ADVERSARY TO BALANCE MY
CRUSADE TO CONVERT BLUE PLANET,
"EARTH'S CHAMPION"...

...NO ALLOWANCE WAS MADE
FOR A MENTOR... AND YET THE
ANALYZER SHOWS ME
SOLOH REY.

NIM! OF ALL
ENTITIES--
NIM!

COME, MY CHILDREN.
HARKEN GODKIN STRAITH.
IT IS TIME FOR GODS
TO CONVERSE...

14 ... IN NEOSPACE."

ARE YOU AWARE
OF THE BREACH
GODKIN STRAITH?

I AM.

IS IT
YOUR
DOING?

IT IS
NOT.

WHAT IS
YOUR
REMEDY?

THERE
IS ONLY
ONE.

I ACKNOWLEDGE.
I ACCEPT. THE MENTOR
REMAINS IN BALANCE,
I TOO SHALL HAVE A
CHAMPION...

...OF MY
CHOOSING.

MEANTIME, ON
EARTH, AS IT IS IN
THE HEAVENS...

... GORKILL CORPUS
HAS HIS OWN PROBLEMS.

WELL, HANDSOME...
WHAT ARE YOU
GONNA DO?

I'M STRANDED
HERE, ON BLUE PLANET,
AND THE REST OF FELON
BALE'S EXPEDITIONARY
FORCE -- MY TROOPS --
ARE DEAD OR PRE-
SUMED SO...

...JUST
LIKE ME.

WE DIDN'T KILL EARTH'S
CHAMPION. I'VE LET DOWN
FELON BALE. LET ME
CLARIFY THAT--I'VE LET
DOWN... A GOD--
PERSONALLY!

SIGH: I
WONDER
WHAT THEY DO TO
YOU AFTER ETERNAL
DAMNATION?

WELL, I'VE
BEEN IN HOT SPOTS
BEFORE, THIS ISN'T
A PROBLEM.

SO MY
SUPPLIES ARE LOW...
I'VE NO NAVIGATION OR
COMMUNICATION GEAR...OR
ANYONE TO COMMUNICATE
WITH... AND NO WAY OF
GETTING BACK HOME!

OKAY,
SO IT'S A
PROBLEM.

BUT I AM STILL A CORPUS
WARRIOR! ELITE OF THE
DECAMUND! GRANTED, I'VE
A FEW OBJECTIONS TO THE
TENETS OF OUR LORD,
FELON BALE...

... BUT THAT WON'T STOP ME
FROM ADOPTING GUERRILLA
TACTICS TO KILL EARTH'S
CHAMPION, AND REDEEM
MYSELF.

ZORKS, I WISH I HAD
SOMETHING TO EAT. I WONDER
WHAT THEY CALL THAT FLAT
ROUND BREAD WITH THE RED
SAUCE AND CHEESE ON TOP?

WELL, THAT COMES LATER.
RIGHT NOW I NEED A BASE
OF OPERATIONS.

AND I SEEM TO REMEMBER
AN EMPTY SPACE IN THIS
OFFICE BUILDING...
RIGHT...
ABOUT...

... HERE!"

YEP. TWO ROOMS.
CARPETING.
VERY NICE.

OH OH.
HEAR
THAT?

NATIVES!
THEY'LL CAUSE A
COMMOTION! SHOULD
I KILL THEM?

NO, NO--WHAT
AM I THINKING?
THEY'RE
CIVILIANS!

REMEMBER-- CODE
OF THE CORP!-- DON'T
KILL CIVILIANS...

... UNLESS
YOU HAVE TO.

... LONG AS WE'RE
HERE, MIGHT AS WELL
SHOW YOU THE INFAMOUS
DEATH OFFICE.

IT'S BEEN UNREVENTABLE SINCE
THAT MURDER HERE IN 1986.
AND WITH THE GLUT OF OFFICE
SPACE IN THIS CITY
ANYWAY...

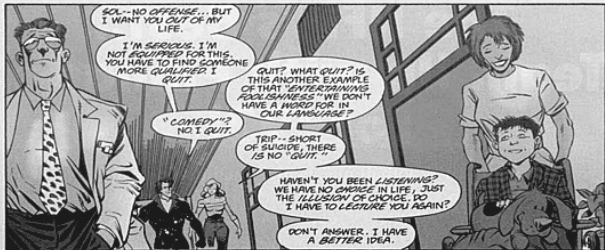
THERE'S A
WINDOW
BROKEN.

MUST'VE BEEN THE
FLOOD FROM THAT BIG
HAILSTORM THE OTHER
DAY. AND THAT UGLY
SCULPTURE MUST BE
FROM THE PREVIOUS
TENANT.

EE-YEMMM! WITH
TASTE LIKE THAT, NO
WONDER THEY KILLED
HIM!

CODE OF THE
CORP!... CODE
OF THE CORP!...







I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING, BUT GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, YOU HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO REFUSE.

HEY, I TOOK PSYCHOLOGY IN COLLEGE. THIS FREE WILL VS. DETERMINISM STUFF IS OLD HAT. YOU'RE NOT IMPRESSING ME!

WHO ARE YOU? I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT YOU EXCEPT "I'M AN EX-JUDGE FROM THE MURDER-SUIT, THAT'S A LONG STORY," AND THAT YOU'VE GOT A REALLY PATRONIZING ATTITUDE.

FINE! IT'S YOUR WORLD, PAL, NOT MINE. WHEN ALL THE SCREAMING HORDES START INVADING, I'LL JUST SLIP BACK THROUGH THE DOORWAY HOME.



FINE!

FINE!

WHAT'S YOUR AGENDA? WHAT IS THIS WORLD TO YOU?!









THERE!
THAT'S FOR
HURTING
ME!

AND I'M NOT
NO SUPER
ANYTHING!!

OH, GREAT!
SHE'S GOT BACK
ON HER FEET
AGAIN!

BUT I'M NOT
GONNA USE MY
POWERS. NOBODY
DECIDES MY LIFE
FOR ME EXCEPT
ME!

I'M GONNA GET
RID OF THIS
BOMB-ESS
ON MY OWN!

CAN'T
FIGHT HER...
GOTTA OUT.
THANK HER.

I NEED
COPS... LOTS
AND LOTS OF
COPS!

THE ROOSEVELT
ISLAND TOWN! OH,
GOD! DO I HAVE
THE GUTS TO
DO THIS?

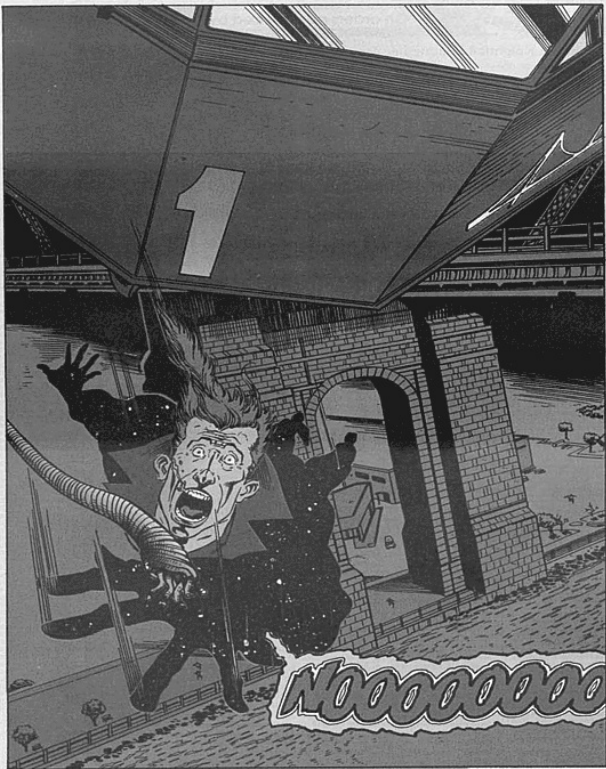
WHAT
TH--?

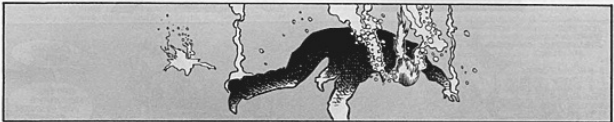
EVERYBODY
OUT! NOW! I'VE
GOT A BOMB!

YOU IN THE BOOTH!
START UP THIS TRAM
OR I'LL BLOW US ALL UP!









SOMEONE TOLD ME EARLIER THAT LIFE IS RANDOM... *MEANING-LESS*. THAT WE ONLY *REACT*-- ONLY HAVE THE *ILLUSION* OF CONTROL. THAT WE DON'T REALLY *MAKE* DECISIONS.

YEAH?
SO?

SO... I
DECIDED
TO DO
THAT!

MY OUTFIT! YOU'VE
TURNED IT TO METAL! I
CAN'T MOVE!

UM...
TRIP?

YOU SEE, SOL? YOU
WERE WRONG. I
DECIDED TO CHANGE
MY MIND.

I SHOWED YOU...
I SHOWED MYSELF
-- I MAKE MY OWN
DECISIONS. IF I
ACCEPT THIS POWER,
IT'S MY CHOICE--
NOT ANYBODY
ELSE'S.

UM...
TRIP?

OHNNN...
SHOOT!

BETTER
NOT MAKE
ANY SUDDEN
MOVES,
SLICK.

WAIT.
DON'T TELL
ME.

THAT'S
NOT OUR
RIDE.

NEXT: PONYTAILS in PRISON!
PLUS: THE REBIRTH OF THE IMPOSSIBLE
Z-MAN!

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MARC McLAURIN - EDITOR
SPENCER LAMM - ASST. EDITOR
MALCOLM SMITH - CONSULTING
EDITOR



Just a couple'a Comic Guys, still'a
around talkin'.

Frank Lovece
Clive Barker and HOKUM and HEX
writer Frank Lovece talk about his if that...
Sue, the over-the-top superhero from the
mind of Clive Barker. But author /
director / producer / artist / screenwriter
Barker can't possibly have the time to be
so involved, can he?

Well, actually, yes. He wrote the book
on which the four (soon to be seven)
Razorline titles are based. Razorline editor
Marc McLauren speaks with him by phone nearly
every day... he's met several times with the
writers and artists... and while he gives the
writers great leeway in depicting and defining
the Barkerverse, Barker and his editorial
colleague, Malcolm Smith (the actor who played
the priest in NIGHT BREED), make themselves
available to answer writers' questions about the
Greater Scheme of Things. They also see every
issue of every book at key stages.

The jaunty, bright-eyed Clive and the less
jaunty, bloodthirsty Fred (who's already sat down
to talk about HOKUM and HEX, with the
hatted, two-eyed Marcus presiding. Let's listen
in, shall we?)

Frank OK — you're trying to come up with an
idea for a super hero book. Somebody else
would've thought, "Mutant!" I'd love to know how
you came up, a failed stand-up comic
suddenly granted godlike powers.

Clive: The whole point of the Deadworld is to
revitalize some of the super hero traditions which
Marvel was so fundamental in creating and
shaping. Now, one of my favorite titles from my
early interaction with the life of Marvel was DR.
STRANGE. The great thing about DR.
STRANGE was it was this curious marriage of
'60s mysticism full of surreal artwork, and
violence (chuckles) on a comic level. And yet it's
a title which I feel has become a little stale,
because I don't think it's aged that well. It was
rooted in the '60s, and I think it's difficult to update
it with being some of its charm.

So I thought, "Let's make a sorcerer supreme
for the late part of the 20th century. Let's give
him mystical/occultic power to somebody and have
him deal with that problem. So what we want to
do, of course, was giving the power to the unlikely
of characters. Trip Munroe is a failed stand-up
comedian. He's the lowest of the low.
Frank: Next to Freddie (chuckles). Gotta tell you, I
really love that poor schmuck Trip. Somebody
asked me, "How do you write for a character like
that?" I said I didn't — I just talk to myself and
write down what I say. How do you like what I've
been doing with your boy so far, Clive?

Clive: I love it. One of my favorite moments in
the first issue is the rubber chicken gag, which I
adore — because we are in the realm of the
surreal here. Here's poor Trip having to defend
himself against these wonderful storm troopers
from another dimension, violent to a fault,
unforgiving to a fault — and yet polite! Which I
love! (chuckles) And they're acting very
reasonable, y'know? (I mean, laughs) "Was it
something I said?"

Frank: They seem very British.

Clive: Absolutely! There's a little Monty Python
there. And I feel as if your tongue is not quite in
your cheek, because you quite clearly are putting
this character in serious jeopardy. But there are
good jokes, and you laugh out loud, and I think
that's a great combination. Malcolm Smith, when
he first read it, I heard him laughing, and I went
downstairs and said, "What are you laughing
at?" He said, "I'm reading HOKUM and HEX."
And I think that's very cool, because the only
time you normally do that in a comic book is
when it's an out-and-out comedy like GROSS.

Frank: Yeah, after those dark, depressing
HELLRAISER stories I wrote, I know I'd be my
instincts to writing humor. I think I see you and
Elaine [Jae, SAINT SINNER] and Fred [Barker,
HYPERGRID].

Clive: We all brought names to the table of
people whose work we had seen and read...

Frank: We're being...?

Clive: Marcus and myself. It was we two who
it, you know. When we tried to do was find
people who wanted not to just go back to the
hoary old clichés. The whole point about the
Barkerverse is to find new riffs on the form, and
yet give readers the kinds of thrills Marvel's been
providing for decades. Marvel does a whole
bunch of things extremely well, and we want to
contribute to those things extremely well, but
we also want to do some things that Marvel
hasn't done before. So it was a question of
finding similarities that would come after that.

It was also important to get creative people
who'd say, "Now that I've been given a few
creative ideas here, I'm gonna run with them."
The whole point of this Barkerverse adventure is
that it be built stone by stone from these initial
ideas, these foundations which I've offered.
We've a chance to create new traditions here.
That's the grand ambition.

Frank: Your initial series proposal I thought was
just top-notch — really fresh and original. Yet
there seemed to be a kind of vagueness there, a
sort of blurred line between Trip as comedian
and Trip as magician. Was that deliberate?
Clive: Yeah. There's a whole interesting thing
going on here. The [recurring] "Trickster"
character in mythology is a very interesting
character because he — and it usually is a he —
occupies a unique place in the cosmology.
Here's a character who is both a fool and a
sacred fool, who is both a clown and a major
wheeler and dealer in the cosmic plan. A
character who is a manipulator, somebody who
can comprehend the way the gods work —
because he knows all gods have feet of clay —
and he knows the way that humanity works,
because he knows that all humanity has
aspirations to the divine. And in a way the
Trickster character — and I think Trip is —
stands somewhere between humanity and the
gods.

I'm giving you a plotline here, and take it or
leave it by all means, but I would love one day for
Trip to meet the great Tricksters. I'd love him to go
into the desert and meet the coyote spirit, the
great American Indian Trickster. I'd love him to
encounter Dr. Rabbitt, which is an archetypal

folklore Trickster. I'd love to make it explicit for the
reader somewhere down the line that he does
stand in an extraordinary tradition. And his power
comes, as we will discover, at least in part out of
his humanity and out of his humor.

Frank: And just to clear up for our readers — I
know how much input you have on a regular
basis, but I'm not just putting your name on
something — but how would you describe your
involvement with it?

Clive: Marcus and I talk over the grand scheme
of things. At the moment we're talking practically
daily. And Malcolm is in the loop as well and is an
important creative element.

My commitment is to be there for the
Razorline imprint creatively, commercially,
watching over the decisions, but only being there
to interfere if things seem to be going away. The
thing I've learned from being an executive
producer (on the Hellraiser movies and others) is
there are two kinds: the kind who really wishes
he could direct and get his finger in the pie at
every moment and tells people how to do their
jobs and another kind, which I hope I fall into.
I'm in this category — who says, "Hey, it's going great,
I'm going to make a few remarks, but otherwise,
you should just get on with it, and if it starts to go
wrong, I'm there to help you solve the problem."

I know how sacred creativity is. And I know
one of the first rules is to respect the creator, and
even if you disagree to find out why you disagree,
— to respect people's creativity to full flower and not
stomp all over it.

Frank: I can vouch that I've been given a lot of
creative freedom.

Clive: That's important, and at some point we're
gonna disagree about something and we're
gonna talk it through. If it's all people coming from
a place of wishing the best for a project, then
finally there should be no sour words, it should be
a question of doing this in a gentlemanly
fashion. There's enough British blood in me to
believe that anything can be sorted out with
articulation and care for the other person's
feelings. I am passionately of the belief that if
— something can't be done without tears and
anger and tearing out of hair, then it probably is
not worth doing. The best books, movies,
comics can be made certainly with pain — "Oh, I
wish I could make this better, how do I do that?"
— but it doesn't have to be a painful damn.

I don't think Marcus and I have ever actually
yelled at each other yet, and I don't think I
am going to happen. We disagree. And we have
mildly heated exchanges about some things.

But at the end of the day we articulate the
disagreement and we either compromise or one
of us gives in. And he's bigger than I am, [laughs]
so...

Next: Imagine you had super powers,
and were entrusted to protect the world
from extradimensional invasion and along
the way wrapped up thousands in property
damage. Welcome to the real world, as
Trip goes on trial. Plus, the re-appearance
of the golden age hero everybody forgot:
The Incredible Z-Man!